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these captivating samples the demand for and use of the unabridged originals cannot fail to be greatly stimulated.

The present volume is one of a projected series, intended to cover the broad range of American history from the earliest discoveries to the present time. The later volumes are to be: Vol. II, "Building of the Republic," 1689-1783; Vol. III, "National Expansion," 1783-1844; Vol. IV, "Welding of the Nation, 1845-1897. How will the later volumes read? To what extent is the success of the present one due to the vast variety of its material and its remoteness from our present-day life and habits of thought? If the succeeding volumes maintain the standard here established it will be no disparagement to any of Professor Hart's previous work to say that in this splendidly edited series of sources he has rendered his greatest service to the study of American history.

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Contemporary American Opinion of the French Revolution. By CHARLES DOWNES HAZEN. Pp. x, 315. Price, \$2.00. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1897.

At no time in American history have domestic politics been more influenced by foreign happenings than during the period of the French Revolution. Following our own struggle for independence, the movement in France aroused a sympathetic interest which could hardly have been greater had that nation been our next door neighbor instead of being separated from us by the Atlantic Ocean. Was her revolution similar to our own? Were its leaders entitled to American sympathy? If European war should follow, was America bound to aid France? Such were the questions demanding answers from our statesmen, and it was upon lines suggested by these questions that political parties divided. Professor Hazen, in the book before us, undertakes to show by quotations from their writings the attitude of leading contemporary Americans toward French conditions and politics as the revolution passed through its successive stages.

The book is divided into two parts. In the first the author acquaints us with the opinions of our official representatives at Paris, and in the second he introduces the sentiments prevalent among Federalists and Republicans in America. Of our three ministers to France from 1787 to 1797, Monroe seems to have been most hopeful for the future of the French Republic and most prejudiced

in its favor. Jefferson, our representative before 1789, had considerable faith in the genius of the French people and little fear of the future, although the practical statesman is seen in his advice to go slowly. Morris alone realized the gravity of the situation, and in 1789, at the very beginning of his mission, saw "a nation which exists in hopes, prospects and expectations, the reverence for ancient establishments gone, existing forms shaken to the foundation and a new order of things about to take place in which perhaps even to the very names, all former institutions will be disregarded." He was amazed at the rapidity with which changes were being accomplished. "Stay where you are a little while and when you come back you will hardly know your country," he writes to the French ambassador at London, and his other writings were in a similar strain. Jefferson, indeed, had prophesied certain changes, but he believed that they would come from the government rather than from the people. The latter had not the capacity for a rapid advance unless driven to it by famine—an unlikely event—but from Brienne much might be expected. Of Necker he had a poorer opinion, and hence on the very eve of his departure in 1789 Jefferson saw no indication of great or immediate changes.

If Jefferson's prophecies have little value his descriptions are more worthy of notice. He traveled quite extensively in France, and his testimony indicates no such harsh conditions among the peasantry as have been pictured by some other writers. The laboring class was not as well off as in England, but was better situated than in Italy. Although meat was rarely used, Jefferson found no lack of nourishing food among the lower classes. He was sorry that judicial privileges were not more extended and yet doubted whether the people were prepared for that great bulwark of liberty, trial by jury. He expected that a series of reforms would be introduced by the government, and the condition of the nation thus gradually improved.

Morris had no such confidence in the government. With keen judgment he prophesied a despotism as the probable result of the confusion prevailing in 1789, but in spite of this drawback he expected that ultimately much good would result. Of the constitution of '91, so favorably received in America, he wrote, "The Almighty himself could not make it succeed without creating a new species of man." He had not that sympathy with the ideal which was noticeable in Jefferson and so prominent in Monroe, hence it is possible he did not appreciate the spirit of the times as they did, but for a critical view of the earlier legislation and a keen estimate of the more prominent leaders the writings of Morris are unsurpassed.

On this side of the Atlantic there was at first an overwhelming sentiment in favor of the revolutionary movement. Democratic societies rapidly sprang up, whose promoters, influenced by the wave of excitement, proposed to see in America herself a movement toward monarchy and aristocracy which it was their duty to combat. It is interesting to follow this sentiment by means of the large number of quotations and selections which Professor Hazen supplies, and to watch on the one hand the Republicans finding excuses for the increasing disturbance in France, while Federalists like John Adams and Knox grew more and more disgusted. This indeed is the great merit of the book before us. Historians of the United States have often described the feelings aroused in this country by the French Revolution; it has remained for Professor Hazen to place before us the materials on which these descriptions are based. In this way a great service has been done to those of us who have not access to the original writings and who yet desire to read the opinions of contemporary Americans at home and abroad. The selections given are extensive and are accompanied by suggestive comments by the author. There is also a bibliography of his sources of information, and while we must confess that some of the selections given are tiresome reading this in no way interferes with the value of the book as a work of reference.

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English Local Government of To-Day. By MILO R. MALTBIE, Ph. D. Columbia University Studies. Vol. IX, No. 1. Pp. 287. Price, \$2.00. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1897.

The local organization of England has undergone such important changes during the present century that this careful study of the existing system of local administration in England meets an urgent need. As was pointed out in a previous number of the ANNALS,* the old system of local autonomy has been essentially modified by the introduction of a strong and far-reaching central control so that the English organization now presents certain important points of similarity with the systems in vogue on the Continent. In the monograph under review, Dr. Maltbie traces the growth and extension of this new central control and makes a critical examination of its results as compared with those of the old method of organization. Beginning with the new poor-law administration organized in 1834

* "Administrative Centralization and Decentralization in England." ANNALS, Vol. x, p. 187. September, 1897.